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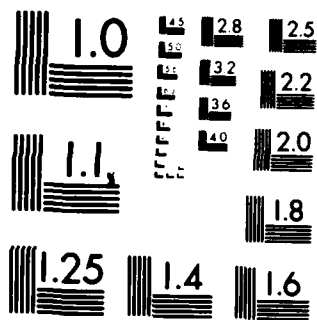
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THE EXTENDED BATTALION COMMAND TOUR

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This group study is an analysis of 05/06 commander's views of the length of time in command. 593 questionnaires were sent to present and former commanders and a return rate of 90% was achieved which reflected the great interest in the subject. There was overall opposition to a policy of command beyond 24 months and an overwhelming opposition to command beyond 30 months. This report contains the questionnaire and a detailed, statistical analysis of the responses.		

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM

THE EXTENDED BATTALION COMMAND TOUR

A GROUP STUDY PROJECT

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Command tour length policy changed in October 1979. Increased unit stability and cohesion were the stated goals. Except for Korea, the policy was implemented Army-wide and has been in full effect for more than three years, but no systematic study had been made to ascertain the impact on the Army or on the perception of those most directly affected by the shift.

MILPERCEN figures show that changes have occurred in selection rates for promotion to colonel, in command declination rates, in battalion commander reliefs, and in the Army's pool of senior officers with battalion-level command experience.

The US Army War College was asked to conduct a survey. Four students in the resident Class of 1983 undertook the task as part of the school's Military Studies Program.

A large but limited population was surveyed: 593 questionnaires went to present and former battalion and brigade commanders and some members of the USAWC Class who had not commanded at the battalion level, plus 92 C&GSC officers whose records showed recent battalion-level assignments. An excellent return rate of 90 percent was obtained.

SURVEY RESULTS

* There was overall opposition to a policy of command beyond 24 months and overwhelming opposition to command beyond 30 months. Most brigade commanders were supportive of up to 30-month tours. Commanders were generally in favor of length of command in relation to their own time in command; i.e., the longer in command the more inclined to favor a longer (but not necessarily 36-month) command.

* The majority--including brigade commanders--are not convinced that longer command time enhances promotion potential. Significantly, however, those who have not commanded still believe command to be essential.

* Respondents believed 3 to 1 that real-time unit mission accomplishment capabilities were enhanced under extended tour commanders, raising the question, however, of short-term gains versus long-term losses to the Army.

* Although the majority of respondents believed the extended tour enhanced officer and junior leader development, a significant minority--especially among the younger officers surveyed--believe that reduced exposure to a variety of commanders may be harmful.

* The belief is widely held that extended command time does not significantly hinder one's chances for later advancement vis-a-vis alternate specialty development.

* Most believed commanders reached their peak of effectiveness in the 13 to 18-month time frame, but with increased experience (i.e., more time in command) respondents shared the conviction that true effectiveness came later.

* Although most agreed that a former battalion commander might have the potential to be a more effective higher level staff officer, it was not clear whether this potential stemmed from the command experience per se or from the superior all-around qualification of the officer who is selected for command.

* With regard to stability and cohesion of units and chains of command, most respondents agree that the extended command tour has had some positive effect. But a significant minority (48%) are not convinced. Those most convinced are those who have commanded the longest. However, nearly 2/3 of their subordinates surveyed, the C&GSC officers, did not agree, and more than half the colonels echoed their doubt.

See page 47 for further encapsulated conclusions of the study. Recommendations are on page 49.



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PREFACE

The study group gratefully acknowledges the superb advice and assistance of Ms. Kathryn Ryan, DA MILPERCEN Survey Division and Captain Dwight Jekel, US Army War College Automated Data Processing Support Division. We appreciate, too, the help of the many other MILPERCEN personnel who provided support. Special thanks are expressed to Dr. Hugh M. Aberman, USAWC Directorate of Academic Affairs, for his wise counsel and guidance, and to Major General Richard D. Lawrence, USAWC Commandant, who insured that the results were not augmented or influenced by him or any "outside agency." Most of all, we thank our fellow officers who provided the data and comments that made the study possible.

It is our sincere hope that these efforts will provide some measure of assistance and insight to those whose task it is to shape the Army of the future.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this military study was to examine the impact of the extended battalion command tour.

BACKGROUND

At the direction of General E. C. Meyer, Chief of Staff, United States Army, the battalion/brigade command tour length was extended to 30 months, plus or minus six months, effective 1 October 1979. This policy change was announced as the Army's initial effort to increase stability and cohesion of the chain of command of Army units. Furthermore, this change in battalion/brigade command tour length was to convey to those who assumed command that their assignment had but one focus--the unit. Thus, lieutenant colonels/colonels assigned to battalion/brigade commands were expected to take the long-term view toward development of capable and well led small units by slowing down the pace, setting unit goals and objectives, and reducing instability.

Since inception of the extended command tour policy over three years ago, a systematic study has not been conducted to determine the perceptions of junior and senior officers on the impact of the new policy. Army-wide interest, coupled with the fact that the preponderance of former battalion commanders in the US Army War College Class of 1983 have completed an

extended battalion command tour, warranted the undertaking of this military study.

Very little published information existed on this subject. MILPERCEN did provide some data which suggestively indicates the following:

-- Promotion to colonel for eligible officers, first time consideration only, disclosed that among those selected for promotion in FY79 (pre-extended tour policy) 80 percent were former battalion commanders and 20 percent had no lieutenant colonel command. There was an 8 percent nonselection of former battalion commanders. In comparison, figures for FY80, FY81, and FY82 revealed a 67, 65, and 67 percent selection rate of former battalion commanders and a 33, 35, and 33 percent selection rate of lieutenant colonel non-prior battalion commanders. In addition, there was an 8, 7, and 8 percent nonselection of former battalion commanders respectively. Thus, while the nonselection of former battalion commanders remained basically constant, the selection percentage for non-commanders increased.

-- Extension of the command tour length reduced significantly the number of commanders per battalion per 60 month period to: 5.00 with 12 months, 3.33 with 18 months, 2.50 with 24 months, 2.00 with 30 months, and 1.66 with 36 months. This analysis indicated a varying reduction in the opportunity for officers to command depending on location of the unit and actual command tour length. For example, actual command tour lengths pre and post-1 October 1979 were: Korea--12 vs 12 months, Germany--24 vs 30+6 months, CONUS--18 vs 30+6 months. Because fewer officers would be afforded the opportunity to command battalion-sized units, a reduction in the number and percentage of officers with battalion command experience would occur in the first-time-considered zone for promotion to colonel, thus

increasing the percentage of selection of officers who have not commanded a battalion.

-- Lieutenant colonel command declinations during FY78 and FY79 were 5.5 percent and 8.6 percent respectively. Following the 1 October 1979 command tour policy change, Lieutenant Colonel command declinations during FY80, FY81, and FY82 were 11.4 percent, 12.1 percent, and 15 percent respectively. While it is important to note that the number of officers involved is relatively small and therefore the data are statistically tentative, there does appear to have been a definite increase in command declinations since the extended command tour became effective at the beginning of FY80.

-- Lieutenant colonel command reliefs during FY78 and FY79 were 8 and 13 officers respectively. Following implementation of the extended command tour policy, lieutenant colonel command reliefs during FY80, FY81, and FY82 were 12, 17, and 16 officers respectively. While it is again important to note that the number of officers involved is small, it is reasonable to suggest that a small increase in command reliefs has occurred since the extended command tour became effective.

It is important to note that the deductions drawn from the MILPERCEN data are predicated upon 840 Army-wide lieutenant colonel level command positions (FY82) and the current Defense Officer Personnel Management Act ceiling at the grade of colonel.

METHODOLOGY

DA DCSPER requested the US Army War College to conduct "an evaluation of the three year command tour." Four students, three of whom had completed an extended command tour, formed a study group as part of the US Army War College Military Studies Program. The students designed the

questionnaire based on their views of areas and factors which impact on or are affected by extended command tour length.

Because of time and resource constraints, a limited population was sampled. Surveys were mailed to respondents in envelopes containing the survey questionnaire, an answer sheet, and a return envelope. All questionnaires were completely anonymous. The sample population consisted primarily of those who had been successful in units or command. MILPERCEN provided the names and addresses of 204 lieutenant colonels and 108 colonels who were in or had completed commands. The US Army War College Class of 1983 (active military) and some of the faculty were also surveyed. Additionally, 92 officers in residence at the Command and General Staff College were also surveyed. The CGSC group was limited to those who had recently served at battalion level. In all, 593 questionnaires were mailed. Thirteen were returned as undeliverable and 14 were returned too late to be included. Excluding these, the return rate was 90 percent, an indication of the high interest in this subject.

CHAPTER II

THE SURVEY

QUESTIONNAIRE

The actual survey questions used in this study are provided in this chapter along with tabulated responses for each item. Survey item results shown consist of the number of respondents who selected the answer, followed by that number expressed as a percentage of the population who answered the question. All questions do not have the same number of respondents because in some cases responses were missing, the individual made an incorrect response (e.g., three answers to choose from and fourth answer marked), or the computer scan failed to pick up an answer.

Comments have been added following some of the questions where considered necessary by the authors for either clarity or emphasis. Detailed analysis of results will be found in Chapter III.

It is acknowledged that the respondents to the survey are not necessarily representative of the entire US Army. As a group they are knowledgeable of command--especially battalion command. Of the 512 respondents, 372 have battalion command experience and 96 have brigade and battalion command experience; 113 were not eligible for battalion command. More than 76 percent of the respondents have advanced degrees and 99 percent are CGSC/AFSC selectees, graduates, or resident students. Significantly different answers to the same question would, in all probability, be received if other groups were sampled--such as those eligible, but not selected for command.

SURVEY RESULTS WITH COMMENTS

PART I - BACKGROUND DATA

1. What is your present rank? (N=511)

CPT	MAJ	LTC	COL	BG or Higher
22(4.3)	65(12.7)	282(55.2)	142(27.8)	0(0)

2. What is your present marital status? (N=509)

Currently Married	Legally Separated	Never Married	Divorced, Marriage Annulled and not Remarried	Widow/Widower
478(93.9)	7(1.4)	13(2.6)	11(2.2)	

3. How many dependents do you have (excluding yourself)? (N=510)

None	One	Two or Three	Four or Five	Six or More
20(3.9)	44(8.6)	264(51.8)	167(32.7)	15(2.9)

4. What is your basic branch? (N=511)

IN/AR/FA/AD	MP/CE/SC	OD/QM/TC	AG/MI/MS	Other
319(62.4)	76(14.9)	69(13.5)	35(6.8)	12(2.3)

5. What is your highest completed level of civilian education? (N=510)

High School	Some College	College Graduate	Some Graduate Work	Graduate or Professional Degree
0(0)	2(0.4)	42(8.2)	78(15.3)	388(76.1)

6. What is your military education level (pick highest)? (N=504)

Advanced Course	CAS-3	CGSC	SSC
	(Selectee, Student, or Grad) (Selectee, Student, or Grad)		
1(0.2)	1(0.2)	187(37.1)	315(62.5)

7. Approximately how much time have you spent in various battalions during your career (excluding school battalions or battalion command)? (N=508)

1-11 months	12-26 months	27-48 months	49-60 months	61 or more months
13(2.6)	31(6.1)	119(23.4)	99(19.5)	246(48.4)

8. Approximately how much time altogether have you spent in command of a company/battery/troop? (N=510)

None	1-11 months	12-18 months	19-24 months	25 months or more
18(3.5)	69(13.5)	154(30.2)	119(23.3)	150(29.4)

PART II

9.* If an officer declines battalion command consideration prior to selection, and then does well in an important job, that officer is as likely to be promoted to colonel as a similar officer who accepted battalion command. (N=511)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
34(6.7)	128(25.0)	51(10.0)	230(45.0)	68(13.3)

COMMENT: The perception of the surveyed population differs from the statistical data provided by MILPERCEN. The majority believe officers who decline consideration for battalion command are not as likely to be promoted later, no matter how well they do in other jobs.

10.* In your opinion, officers decline battalion command primarily as a result of: (N=508)

Financial Consideration	Family Consideration	Stress of Command	Alternate Skill Development	Other
6(1.2)	219(43.1)	220(43.3)	20(3.9)	43(8.5)

COMMENT: More than 86% of the respondents perceive that the stress of command and family considerations are the principal reasons for declining battalion command.

11. For career progression, the longer one is in command the better are his/her chances of advancement. (N=511)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55(10.8)	167(32.7)	138(27.0)	135(26.4)	16(3.1)

12. Officers who command a battalion for 30 months or more may have less time to develop an alternate specialty. Some say that will adversely affect their chances for advancement. Do you: (N=511)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7(1.4)	36(7.0)	88(17.2)	291(56.9)	89(17.4)

COMMENT: Most respondents apparently believe command is still the key to advancement.

13.* As a general rule, the battalion commander becomes most effective during what period of a command tour? (N=507)

7 to 12 months	13 to 18 months	19 to 24 months	25 to 30 months	31 months or more
85(16.8)	255(50.3)	133(26.2)	25(4.9)	9(1.8)

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

14.* As a general rule, during what period does the effectiveness of a battalion commander in command start to decrease (excluding short tour areas)? (N=508)

13 to 18 months	19 to 24 months	25 to 30 months	31 months or more	Does not decrease
4(0.8)	60(11.8)	235(46.3)	99(19.5)	110(21.6)

15.* In performance as a staff officer at division level (or higher), a former battalion commander when compared to an officer who has not commanded at battalion level is likely to be: (N=511)

Much more Effective	More Effective	Just as Effective	Less Effective	Much Less Effective
164(32.1)	218(42.7)	97(19.0)	26(5.1)	6(1.2)

COMMENT: More than 74 percent of the respondents agree that an ex-battalion commander is likely to be a better staff officer than is a non-battalion commander. Whether that potential is based on the command experience or on the officer's overall quality--which got him selected for command as well--is a question which was not pursued.

16. Some believe that senior commanders will be more likely to relieve a marginal commander early in his command if that officer is going to be in command for 30 ± 6 months than if that officer is scheduled to command for a shorter period such as 12 or 18 months. Do you: (N=509)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19(3.7)	147(28.9)	152(29.9)	164(32.2)	27(5.3)

COMMENT: Data provided by MILPERCEN indicate a larger percent of commanders are being relieved under the extended command policy.

17.* The extension of command time has greatly improved the stability and cohesion of the chain of command. (N=511)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
75(14.7)	177(34.6)	71(13.9)	143(28.0)	45(8.8)

18.* The extension of command time has greatly improved the stability and cohesion of the unit. (N=511)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
80(15.7)	184(36.0)	72(14.1)	141(27.6)	34(6.7)

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

19.* Development of subordinate leaders is an important responsibility of battalion commanders. Extended command for the battalion commander: (N=511)

Significantly improves leader development	Slightly improves leader development	Has no effect on leader development	Slightly harms leader development	Severely harms leader development
200(39.1)	195(38.2)	97(19.0)	19(3.7)	0(0)

COMMENT: No "severely harms" response.

20.* In your opinion, what is the impact of the extended battalion command tour on the capability of battalions with extended tour commanders to accomplish assigned missions? (N=511)

Significantly improves mission accomplishment	Slightly improves mission accomplishment	Neither improves nor degrades	Slightly harms mission accomplishment	Significantly harms unit mission accomplishment
190(37.2)	193(37.8)	118(23.1)	10(2.0)	0(0)

COMMENT: Very strong positive response. No "significantly harms" response.

21.* As a result of the extended command tours, junior officers will in most cases serve longer under one commander. This will: (N=510)

Significantly improve officer development	Slightly improve officer development	Have no effect on officer development	Slightly harm officer development	Significantly harm officer development
143(28.0)	215(42.2)	92(18.0)	60(11.8)	0(0)

COMMENT: Very strong positive response. No "significantly harms" response.

22.* As a result of extending the length of the command tour, battalion commanders are in fact more likely to allow junior officers to make mistakes without retribution. (N=512)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
69(13.5)	213(41.6)	117(22.9)	99(19.3)	14(2.7)

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

23. Does stress on the family of the battalion commander change with the time in command? (N=511)

Stress increases with time in command	Stress is greater during the "middle" of command	Stress remains generally constant	Stress decreases with time in command
190(37.2)	21(4.1)	217(42.5)	83(16.2)

24.* Does stress on the families of members of the battalion (other than the family of the battalion commander) change with the length of time in command of the battalion commander? (N=505)

Stress increases with length of the command tour	There is no change in stress with length of the command tour	Stress decreases with length of the command tour
77(15.2)	272(53.9)	156(30.9)

25.* As a general rule, the home of a child whose parent is a battalion commander is as conducive to future development of a child as is the home of an officer who is not a battalion commander. (N=512)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
38(7.4)	136(26.6)	156(30.5)	143(27.9)	39(7.6)

26.* If you were responsible for making the decision, how long would you keep battalion commanders in command (other than in areas such as Korea)? (N=512)

12-18 months	19-24 months	25-30 months	31-36 months	37 months or more
22(4.3)	287(56.1)	135(26.4)	60(11.7)	8(1.6)

27. If you are married, how long do you think your wife would want the battalion command tour to be (other than in areas such as Korea)? (N=507)

Not Married	12-18 months	19-24 months	25-30 months	31 months or more
24(4.7)	121(23.9)	269(53.1)	58(11.4)	35(6.9)

28. What is your status of selection for battalion command? (N=499)

Not eligible for Bn Cmd	Eligible but not selected for Bn Cmd	Selected for and declined Bn Cmd	Accepted Bn Cmd
113(22.6)	12(2.4)	2(0.4)	372(74.5)

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

PART III

The following questions were for officers who were either in command of a battalion or who had completed command.

29. What is your battalion command status? (N=401)

In command now.	Completed command.
45(11.2)	356(88.8)

30. How many months have you completed as a battalion commander? (N=401)

12 months or less	13-19 months	20-25 months	26-31 months	32 months or more
9(2.2)	102(25.4)	97(24.2)	128(31.9)	65(16.2)

31. Location of battalion command. (N=401)

Korea	Germany	Europe, other than Germany	CONUS	Other
10(2.5)	119(29.7)	5(1.2)	241(60.1)	26(6.5)

32. Type of battalion command? (N=402)

TOE, Combat Arms	TOE, Other	Training Battalion	Administrative Battalion (such as School or Garrison)	Other
230(57.2)	107(26.6)	40(10.0)	10(2.5)	15(3.7)

33. Number of dependents who accompanied you during your command tour. (N=402)

No Dependents	One Dependent	Two Dependents	Three Dependents	Four Dependents or more
25(6.2)	26(6.5)	42(10.4)	161(40.0)	148(36.8)

34.* Did you find the need to finance social activities associated with battalion command burdensome? (N=401)

Significant Burden	Moderate Burden	Light Burden	No Burden
44(11.0)	152(37.9)	122(30.4)	83(20.7)

COMMENTS: More than 79 percent perceive that financial responsibility associated with battalion command is burdensome to some extent.

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

35.* Had you not been selected for battalion command would you have (N=397)

Focused on an alternate specialty?	Intensely focused on primary specialty?	Retired earlier.
128(32.2)	67(16.9)	202(50.9)

36. At what period of time in your command did you begin to feel comfortable in your ability to lead, command, and manage effectively and efficiently the resources of your battalion? (N=400)

Was always confident	During 1-3 months in command	During 4-8 months in command	During 9-12 months in command	After 13 months or more in command
113(28.2)	59(14.8)	147(36.8)	63(15.8)	18(4.5)

37. Should command be an OPMS specialty for which an officer applies and is selected? (N=398)

Yes	No
141(35.4)	257(64.6)

38.* Which statement best describes your tolerance level of mistakes by subordinates while you were in command? (N=400)

Was consistent throughout command	Increased with time in command	Decreased with time in command
255(63.8)	81(20.3)	64(16.0)

COMMENT: The strongly held value of "consistency" in leadership style undoubtedly compressed the variety of response to this question.

39. As a teacher and developer of subordinates, your performance in command. (N=396)

I have been in command less than six months	Was consistent throughout	Was best in the first six months	Was best in the middle six months	Was best in the last six months
2(0.5)	201(50.8)	7(1.8)	92(23.2)	94(23.7)

COMMENT: Consistency is again a highly valued characteristic of performance.

* See Chapter III, Analysis of Results.

PART IV

The following questions were for officers either in command at brigade-level or those who had commanded at brigade-level.

40. What is your brigade-level command status? (N=95)

In command now	Completed command
5(5.3)	90(94.7)

41. How many months have you completed as a brigade-level commander? (N=96)

12 months or less	13-19 months	20-25 months	26-31 months	32 months or more
8(8.3)	20(20.8)	25(26.0)	28(29.2)	15(15.6)

42. Location of your brigade level command. (N=95)

Korea	Germany	Europe, other than Germany	CONUS	Other
7(7.4)	16(16.8)	7(7.4)	59(62.1)	6(6.3)

43. Type of brigade command? (N=96)

TOE, Combat Arms	TOE, Other	Training Brigade	Administrative Brigade (such as School or Garrison)	Other
56(58.3)	16(16.7)	7(7.3)	3(3.1)	14(14.6)

44. How many battalion commanders who were subordinate to you commanded battalions in excess of 24 months (finishing command either during or after your command tenure)? (N=96)

None	One	Two	Three	Four or more
38(39.6)	8(8.3)	17(17.7)	12(12.5)	21(21.9)

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

GENERAL

Data in the form of optical scan answer sheets were processed by the Automated Data Processing Support Division at the US Army War College. Subgroups of those responding to the survey were identified and selected such as the commanders who commanded different types of battalions and the commanders of battalions in different geographical areas. Responses of these subgroups to various questions were then examined in detail.

In many cases no correlation was found even where suspected (such as "size of family" to "the stress on the family of the battalion commander"), and in other cases trends and correlations were found. It is obvious that with this population size, a single variable cannot always be isolated. However, the most visible and significant variable with respect to the question of the command tour length policy was the amount of time that the respondent commanded a battalion. In an "average" battalion command, the length of the command tour, type of battalion commanded, location of the battalion, and the branch of the commander may all have an interactive effect on the answer provided by the respondent. Groups with samples of less than 15 were excluded from detailed analysis unless results indicated additional study should be done.

The complete survey, with all data cross-referencing and analysis, is on file at the US Army War College. Access may be obtained through the Director of Academic Affairs.

LENGTH OF COMMAND TOUR

Army personnel are fond of debating the command tour length question. Several sets of data are involved in the answer as developed by this study.

Four questions are key:

No. 26: How long would "you" keep battalion commanders in command?

No. 13: When does a battalion commander become most effective?

No. 14: When does the effectiveness of a battalion commander start to decline?

No. 36: When does a battalion commander start to feel confident?

In all cases, a significant difference in answers based on time in command of a battalion was evident. A similar trend can be seen in the answers of brigade commanders based on the length of their command.

Many categories of respondents are shown to illustrate the type of analysis given to each question. Answers shown are in percent of respondents in each category that picked that answer to question 26.

How long would you keep battalion commanders in command?

<u>Category of Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Length of Command Desired</u>				
		<u>12-18</u> <u>months</u>	<u>19-24</u> <u>months</u>	<u>25-30</u> <u>months</u>	<u>31-36</u> <u>months</u>	<u>37 mos</u> <u>or more</u>
Entire population	511	4.3	56.1	26.4	11.7	1.6
All Bn Cdrs	372	2.2	55.9	26.2	13.7	1.6
Bn Cdrs 13-19 mos TIC*	102	4.9	72.5	12.7	9.8	-
Bn Cdrs 20-25 mos TIC*	96	1.0	62.5	24.0	11.5	1.0
Bn Cdrs 26-31 mos TIC*	127	1.6	47.2	36.2	13.4	1.6
Bn Cdrs 32+ mos TIC*	65	-	38.5	35.4	21.5	4.6
Bn Cdrs, Bn in Ger	119	.8	52.9	28.6	16.8	.8
Bn Cdrs, Bn in CONUS	241	2.9	58.1	25.7	11.2	2.1
TOE (Cbt Arms) Bn Cdr	230	3.0	55.2	23.9	16.1	1.7
TOE (other) Bn Cdr	107	-	55.1	31.8	13.1	-
Training Bn Cdr	40	-	67.5	30.0	-	2.5
Majors at CGSC	65	12.3	52.3	29.2	3.1	3.1
All Bde Cdrs	96	3.1	17.7	59.4	7.3	12.5
Bde Cdrs 13-19 mos TIC*	20	5.0	15.0	75.0	-	5
Bde Cdrs 20-25 mos TIC*	25	8.0	28.0	52.0	4.0	8.0
Bde Cdrs 26-31 mos TIC*	28	-	7.1	64.3	14.3	14.3
Bde Cdrs 32+ mos TIC*	15	-	13.3	53.3	6.7	26.7
Eligible, not sel for Bn Cmd**	12	50.0	41.7	8.3	-	-
*TIC, Time in Cmd **Inadequate Sample						

Although the majority of respondents selected a command length of 19-24 months as the most desired, the most popular choice by brigade commanders was 25-30 months.

PERIOD OF COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS

Question 13 asks when a battalion commander becomes most effective. A significant majority of respondents, regardless of subgroup examined, believe the commander becomes most effective at 13-18 months.

Time the Battalion Commander Becomes Most Effective

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>7-12 months</u>	<u>13-18 months</u>	<u>19-24 months</u>	<u>25-30 months</u>	<u>31 mos or more</u>
Entire population	507	16.8	50.3	26.2	4.9	1.8
All Bn Cdrs	369	17.1	47.4	28.7	5.1	1.6
Bn Cdrs w/13-19 mos TIC	101	26.7	54.5	14.9	3.0	1.0
Bn Cdrs w/20-25 mos TIC	96	14.6	54.2	29.2	2.1	-
Bn Cdrs w/26-31 mos TIC	126	13.5	42.9	35.7	6.3	1.6
Bn Cdrs w/32+ mos TIC	64	7.8	39.1	35.9	10.9	6.3
Bn Cdr TOE (Cbt Arms)	208	18.8	47.6	25.5	6.3	1.9
Bn Cdr TOE (Other)	98	13.3	49.0	33.7	3.1	1.0
Bn Cdr, Tng Bn	37	18.9	43.0	35.1	2.7	-
Cpts, CGSC	22	22.7	59.1	18.2	-	-
Majs, CGSC	65	20.0	53.8	16.9	.2	3.1
All Bde Cdrs	96	20.8	56.3	17.7	4.2	1.0

The pattern of answer as to when effectiveness starts to decline (question 14) is not as clear. It seems to generally fall within 25-30 months, but a significant number indicated after 31 months--or never.

Question 14: As a general rule, during what period does the effectiveness of a battalion commander in command start to decrease (excluding short tour areas)?

<u>Start of Decreased Effectiveness for Battalion Commander</u>						
<u>Category of Respondent</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>13-18 months</u>	<u>19-24 months</u>	<u>25-30 months</u>	<u>31 months or more</u>	<u>Does not decrease</u>
Entire Population	508	.8	11.8	46.3	19.5	21.6
All Bn Cdrs	369	.3	11.1	44.2	19.0	25.5
Bn Cdrs 13-19 mos						
TIC	101	-	17.8	52.5	10.9	18.8
Bn Cdrs 20-25 mos						
TIC	95	1.1	14.7	41.1	21.1	22.1
Bn Cdrs 26-31 mos						
TIC	127	.8	6.3	48.0	20.5	24.4
Bn Cdrs 32+ mos						
TIC	65	-	3.1	24.6	32.3	40.0
Bn Cdrs, TOE (Combat Arms)	226	.9	13.7	37.6	19.0	28.8
Bn Cdrs, TOE (Other)	107	-	5.6	46.7	25.2	22.4
Bn Cdrs, Tng Bns	40	-	10.0	65.0	7.5	17.5
Bn Cdrs, Bns						
Germany	106	-	9.4	44.3	19.8	26.4
Bn Cdrs, Bns CONUS	220	.5	10.9	43.6	19.5	25.5
All Bde Cdrs	96	1.0	15.6	44.8	16.7	21.9

The answers to this question can be interpreted several ways. Generally, effectiveness starts to decline at 25-30 months (46.3%), with 19.5 percent believing effectiveness does not start declining until after 30 months. Twenty-one percent believe effectiveness does not decrease.

An obvious "bracket" is created on each side of the 24 months option, with the perception of becoming most effective at 18 and effectiveness starting to decline at approximately 25-30 months in command. Variables such as development of junior officers, stability and cohesion of the unit, accomplishment of unit mission, family stress, and preparedness for mobilization or war must also have an impact on the decision. These will be discussed in turn.

Figures 1 through 8 graphically illustrate the answers to questions 13, 14, and 26.

A COMPARISON OF ANSWERS FOR QUESTIONS 13, 14 and 26

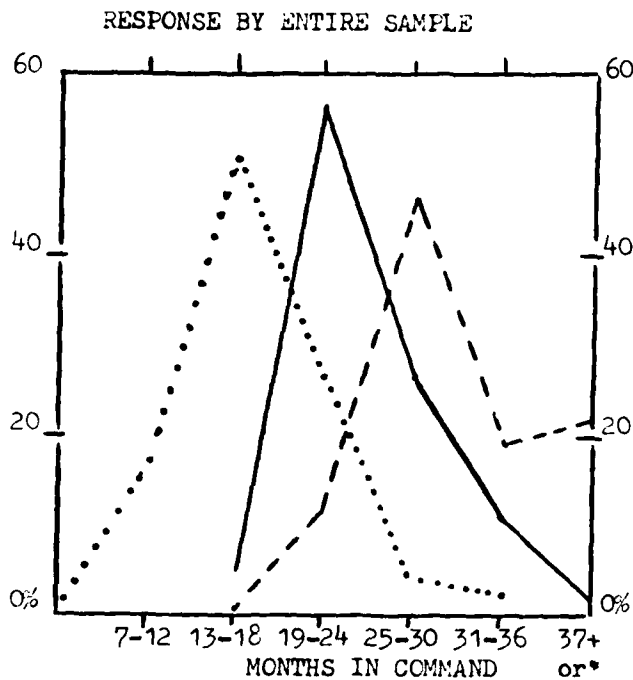


Figure 1

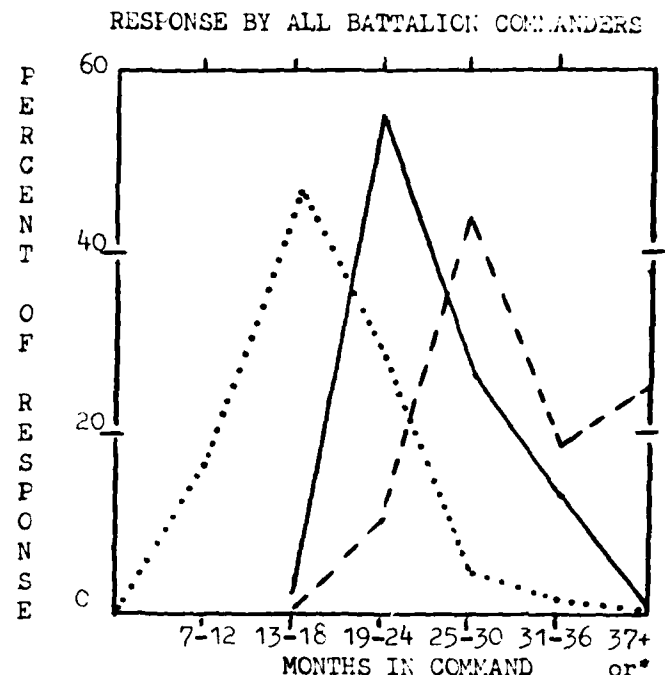


Figure 2

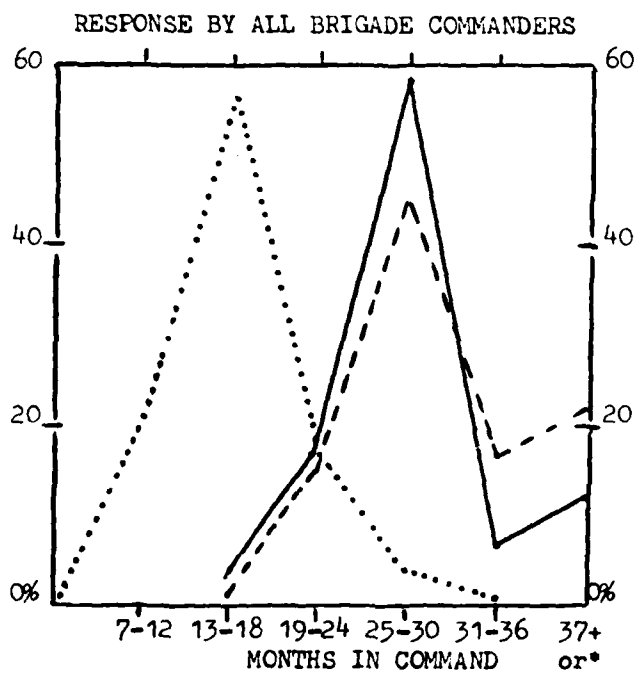


Figure 3

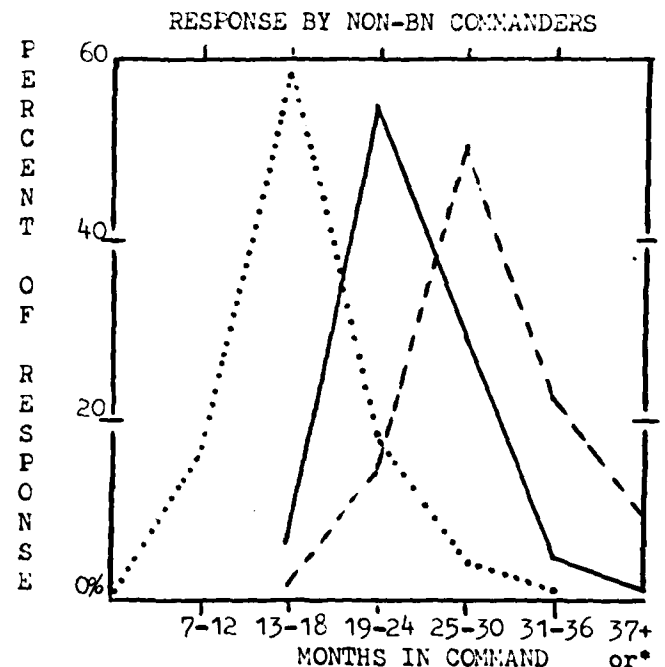


Figure 4

- THE BATTALION COMMANDER BECOMES EFFECTIVE (QUESTION 13)
- HOW LONG WOULD YOU KEEP A BATTALION COMMANDER IN COMMAND (QUESTION 26)
- - - - WHEN DOES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A BATTALION COMMANDER START TO DECLINE (QUESTION 14)

* Question 14 had a response of "does not decrease."

RESPONSE BY BN CDRS, 13-19 MOS IN CMD

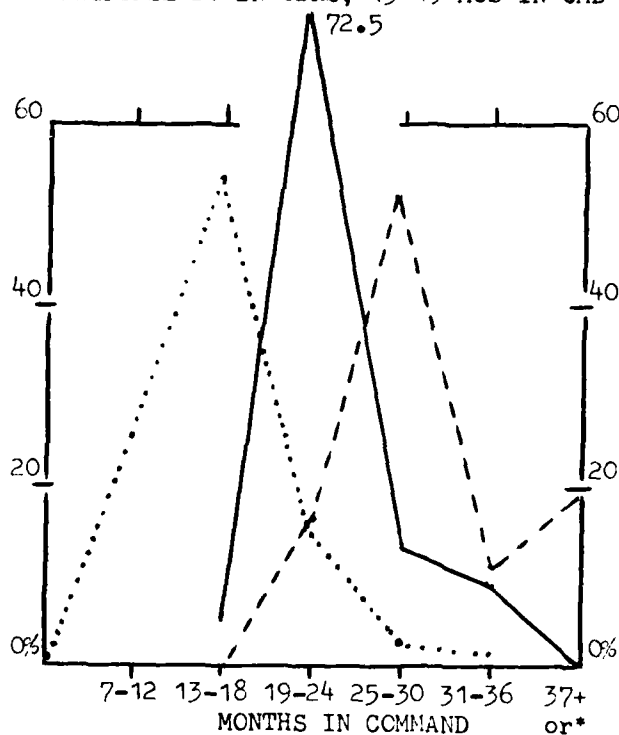


Figure 5

RESPONSE BY BN CDRS, 20-25 MOS IN CMD

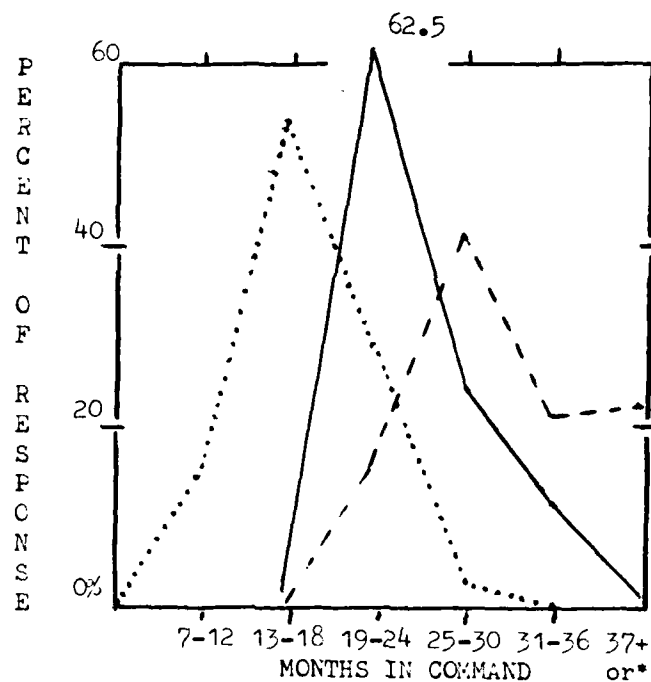


Figure 6

RESPONSE BY BN CDRS, 26-31 MOS IN CMD

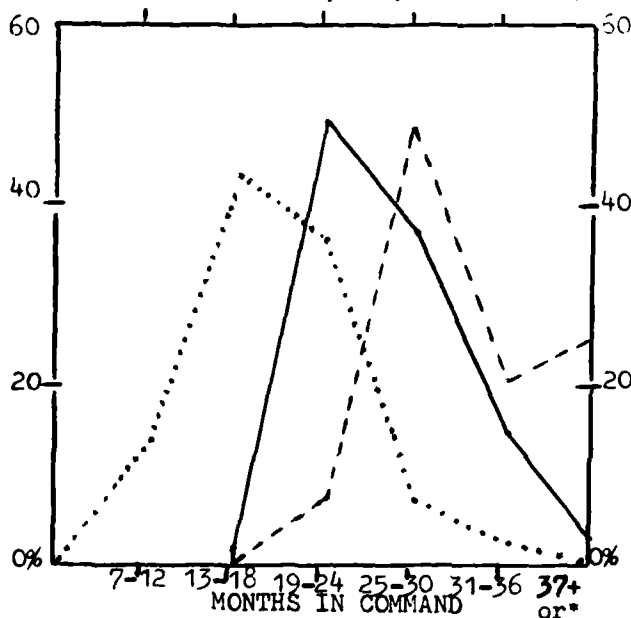


Figure 7

RESPONSE BY BN CDRS, 37+ MOS IN CMD

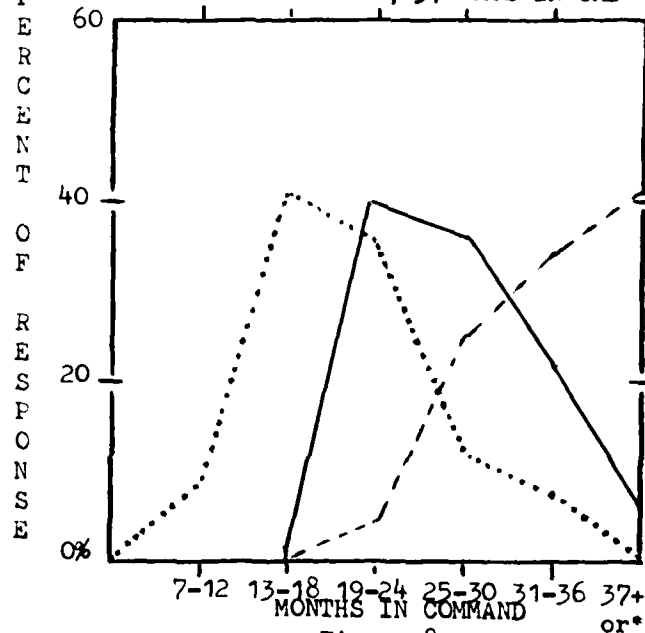


Figure 8

- THE BATTALION COMMANDER BECOMES EFFECTIVE (QUESTION 13)
- HOW LONG WOULD YOU KEEP A BATTALION COMMANDER IN COMMAND (QUESTION 26)
- - - WHEN DOES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A BATTALION COMMANDER START TO DECLINE (QUESTION 14)

* Question 14 had a response of "does not decrease."

EFFECT UPON UNITS

Stability and cohesion of units were believed to be enhanced by extending the length of time that battalion commanders commanded. Results of the survey hint, but do not confirm, that increased stability or cohesion of units has not resulted. Comments of respondents tend to support these findings: The battalion commander helps, but stability and cohesion are heavily influenced by the length of tenure of other unit members such as NCO's, company/battery commanders, and staff officers. Answers are again linked to the length of battalion command time. As a commander's tour length increased so did the degree of agreement with the question as well as a desire to provide an answer.

Question 17 asks if the extension of command time greatly improved stability. Below the question are answers of various groups. Answers are shown in percent of respondents providing that answer.

The extension of command time has greatly improved the stability and cohesion of the chain of command.

<u>Respondents</u>		<u>Strongly</u> <u>N</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither Agree</u> <u>nor Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>
Entire Population	511	14.7	34.6	13.9	28.0	8.8
Bn Cdr w/13/19						
mos TIC	102	10.8	30.4	19.6	31.4	7.8
Bn Cdr w/20-25						
mos TIC	96	12.5	30.2	18.8	28.1	10.4
Bn Cdr w/26-31						
mos TIC	127	21.3	34.6	7.9	29.1	7.1
Bn Cdr w/32+						
mos TIC	65	27.7	38.5	6.2	20.0	7.7
All Bde Cdrs	96	14.6	35.4	20.8	24.0	5.2

Responses did not vary significantly between types or locations of commands. Answers to question 18 were similar to those of 17.

It is considered significant, however, that an overwhelmingly positive response was noted to question 20 which asked if extended battalion command tours assisted in the accomplishment of unit mission. More than 75 percent of those with command experience believed extended command tours assisted in mission accomplishment. Only two percent believed unit mission accomplishment was slightly harmed and no respondent believed that unit mission accomplishment was harmed significantly by extending commanders.

Question 20 asks: "In your opinion, what is the impact of the extended battalion command tour on the capability of battalions with extended tour commanders to accomplish assigned missions?"

Impact on Mission Accomplishment

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Signif</u> <u>Improves</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Improves</u>	<u>Neither</u> <u>Improves or</u> <u>Degrades</u>		<u>Slightly</u> <u>Harms</u>	<u>Signif</u> <u>Harms</u>
Entire Population	511	37.2	37.8	23.1		2.0	--
All Bn Cdrs	371	42.3	35.3	20.5		1.9	--
Bn Cdrs 13-19 mos TIC	102	28.4	36.3	32.4		2.9	--
" " 20-25 " "	96	28.1	41.7	28.1		2.1	--
" " 26-31 " "	126	51.6	36.5	11.1		.8	--
" " 32+ " "	65	67.7	20.0	12.3		--	--
Bn Cdrs, Germany	107	37.4	38.3	22.4		1.9	--
Bn Cdrs, CONUS	221	42.5	36.2	20.4		.9	--
Bn Cdrs(TOE-Cbt Arms)	210	45.2	29.0	24.3		1.4	--
Bn Cdrs(TOE-other)	98	41.8	40.8	14.3		3.1	--
Bn Cdrs, Tng Bns	37	24.3	51.4	21.6		2.7	--
All Bde Cdrs	96	37.5	35.4	25.0		2.1	--

JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

Most leaders agree that commanders have a unique responsibility to train those who will someday also command. Questions 19 and 21 attempted to examine the effects on junior officer development and the leadership development of those junior officers of the extended command policy. A similar

question (number 39) asked those with battalion command experience their perception of extended command and its effect on leader development.

Selected answers to question 19 are shown below. Similar answers, as would be expected, are shown for question 21. It is significant that in both questions not a single respondent choose the option of "severely or significantly harms."

Question 19

. . . extended command for the battalion commander.

Effect on Leader Development

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Signif Improves</u>	<u>Slightly Improves</u>	<u>Has No Effect</u>	<u>Slightly Harms</u>	<u>Signif Harms</u>
Entire population	511	39.1	38.2	19.0	3.7	--
All Bn Cdrs	371	45.0	35.8	16.7	2.4	--
All Bde Cdrs	96	37.5	36.5	24.0	2.1	--
Bde Cdr w/13-19 mos TIC	20	10.0	40.0	45.0	5.0	--
" " 20-25 " "	25	28.0	52.0	16.0	4.0	--
" " 26-31 " "	28	50.0	32.1	17.9	--	--
" " 32+	15	66.7	13.3	20.0	--	--

Question 21

. . . junior officers will in most cases serve longer under one commander.

Effect on Officer Development

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Signif Improves</u>	<u>Slightly Improves</u>	<u>No Effect</u>	<u>Slightly Harms</u>	<u>Signif Harms</u>
Entire Population	510	28.0	42.2	18.0	11.8	--
All Bn Cdrs	371	31.8	42.9	15.1	10.2	--
Bn Cdr w 13-19 mos TIC	102	15.7	50.0	18.6	15.7	--
" " 20-25 " "	96	25.0	42.7	20.8	11.5	--
" " 26-31 " "	126	42.1	40.5	11.1	6.3	--
" " 32+ " "	65	49.2	32.3	12.3	6.2	--
All Bde Cdrs	96	25.0	49.0	15.6	10.4	--

As time in command increases, so does the belief that officer and leader development is improved by extending battalion commanders. Trends of similar nature were noted in both battalion and brigade commanders based on time in command.

Question 22 attempted to ascertain if extending the command tour resulted in commanders allowing junior officers to make mistakes without retribution. Most of the respondents (55.1%) believed it did, 22 percent felt it did not, and 22.9 percent had no opinion. As the length of time in battalion command increased, so did the percentage of commanders who agreed. Most commanders (63.8%) felt their tolerance level of mistakes by subordinates was consistent throughout command. No significant differences were noted for location or type of command.

Thus, the sample which responded to the survey felt that commanders with long tours did a better job of developing subordinates than did short-term commanders. Again, the survey is "weighted" by those who commanded for 24 months or more, and the longer the command, the more positive was the response.

Some of the responses to question 38 "tolerance level of mistakes by subordinates" are shown. The answer to this question are applicable to 19, 21, and 22.

Question 38: Which statement best describes your tolerance level of mistakes by subordinates while you were in command?

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Was Consistent Throughout</u>	<u>Increased With Time in Cmd</u>	<u>Decreased With Time in Cmd</u>
Entire Population	400	63.7	20.3	16.0
Bn Cdrs 13-18 mos TIC	102	71.6	20.6	7.8
" " 20-25 " "	97	55.7	21.6	22.7
" " 26-31 " "	126	63.5	17.5	19.0
" " 32+ " "	65	60.0	26.2	13.8
All Bde Cdrs	96	67.4	24.2	8.4

STRESS OF COMMAND IMPACT

The "stress of command" and "the stress of command on the family of the battalion commander" are often heard in conversation with extended tour

commanders. Questions 10, 23, 24, and 25 examine the impact of stress on the commander and his family. Clear answers were not evident in the results. Question 10 asked why officers declined battalion command. Family consideration and the stress of command were the two most significant answers (both 43%). Commanders of battalions in Germany cited family consideration as the primary reason in 53.4 percent of the cases. Training battalion commanders felt stress of command was dominant in 57.5 percent of the responses. Both cases are the extreme percentages obtained.

No discernable pattern was detected in relation to other locations, type of battalion command, or time in battalion command. Battalion commanders and brigade commanders thought stress remained generally constant, but 33.7 percent of battalion commanders and 38.5 percent of brigade commanders believed stress increased with the time in command. Most officers who commented on the question stated stress was directly "schedule" and/or "boss" related.

Similar results to question 24 (stress on family other than that of the battalion commander) were noted.

Question 25 was designed to determine the perception of commanders on the conduciveness of the home of the battalion commander to the future development of the child. The answers were about evenly divided among agree (34%), neither agree nor disagree (30.5%), and disagree (35.5%). No significant differences were noted in any subgroups analysis, including marital status, size of family, battalion location, type of battalion, or length of command.

In summary, stress of command cannot be definitively evaluated using only the results of this study, but it is a subject which appears worthy of further examination.

EFFECT OF MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO COMMAND

One aspect of command which was not addressed in the survey was the effect of the lack of battalion command experience on those eligible to command units. An adequate sample was not surveyed to obtain valid results; however, some suggestive data can be discerned from the survey.

Question 35: Had you not been selected for battalion command would you have?

(Only present or former battalion commanders answered this question.)

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Intensely Focused</u>		
		<u>Focused on an</u> <u>Alternate Speciality</u>	<u>on Primary</u> <u>Speciality</u>	<u>Retired</u> <u>Earlier</u>
All Bn Cdrs	397	32.2	16.9	50.9
All Bde Cdrs	94	29.4	16.0	54.3
Bn Cdrs TOE (Cbt Arms)	228	33.8	11.4	54.9
Bn Cdrs TOE (Other)	105	29.5	27.6	42.9
Bn Cdrs Tng Bn	39	25.6	20.5	53.8

As can be seen, most indicated they would have "retired earlier" had they not been selected for command. The exception is the commander of the TOE battalion (other than combat arms) who it is surmised has an alternate skill on which to rely.

Question 9 indicated that all categories of survey respondents believe that those who command at battalion level have a better chance for promotion to colonel.

. . . likely to be promoted as a similar officer who accepted command?

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Strongly</u>		<u>Neither Agree</u>		<u>Strongly</u>	
		<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>nor Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
Entire Population	511	6.7	25.0	10.0	45.0	13.3	
All Bn Cdrs	372	8.1	28.8	10.5	43.0	9.7	
Not Eligible for							
Bn Cmd	113	2.7	13.3	8.0	54.9	21.2	
All Bde Cdrs	96	5.2	18.8	11.5	51.0	13.5	

Question 15 also reflects on the benefit of battalion command to the Army, and to the status of the individual officer within the Army.

Question 15: In performance as a staff officer at division level (or higher), a former battalion commander when compared to an officer who has not commanded at battalion level is likely to be:

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Much More Effective</u>	<u>More Effective</u>	<u>Just as Effective</u>	<u>Less Effective</u>	<u>Much Less Effective</u>
Entire Population		32.1	42.7	19.0	5.1	1.2
All Bn Cdrs		36.3	43.3	14.8	4.6	1.1
All Bde Cdrs	96	43.6	34.3	13.5	4.2	4.2
Majs, CGSC	65	20.0	47.7	32.3	--	--

Respondents feel strongly that an ex-battalion commander is a more effective staff officer. The failure to be selected for command, especially if a combat arms officer, does reduce the status of that officer in the eyes of many (questions 9 and 15) and perhaps even in his own eyes (question 35).

FINANCIAL BURDEN OF COMMAND

Commanders often discuss how much it costs to command a battalion considering wedding gifts, New Year's receptions, change of command, etc. Question 34 attempted to determine if a burden did in fact exist.

Question 34: Did you find the need to finance social activities associated with battalion command burdensome?

<u>Category of Respondents</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Signif Burden</u>	<u>Moderate Burden</u>	<u>Light Burden</u>	<u>No Burden</u>
All Bn Cdrs	401	11.0	37.9	30.4	20.7
Bn Cdrs, TOE Bn (Cbt Arms)	220	12.2	37.6	30.6	19.7
Bn Cdrs, TOE (Other)	107	11.7	40.2	26.2	22.4
Bn Cdrs, Tng Bn	40	2.5	35.0	40.0	22.5
Bn Cdrs, Germany	119	16.8	42.9	28.6	11.8
Bn Cdrs, CONUS	239	7.1	38.1	30.5	24.3
All Bde Cdrs	94	6.4	38.3	26.6	28.7

Germany appears to be more expensive than other areas in which to command. Training battalion commanders are less sensitive to monetary expenses incurred with battalion command. In summary, more than 79 percent of commanders surveyed report the need to finance social activities is a burden.

CHAPTER IV

REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS OF RESPONDENTS

GENERAL

Comments were solicited on any aspect of the survey which respondents wished to address. Seventy-six percent (386) of the 511 officers responding to the survey provided written comments. The comments addressed nearly all areas of the extended command study, but most focused on five general areas. The question of battalion command tour length (Question 26) received the most attention. Other aspects of major concern to the respondents were stability and cohesion of the chain of command and unit (Questions 17 and 18), effectiveness of extended battalion commanders (Questions 13, 14, 19, and 20), stress on the individual and family (Question 23), and mobilization capability.

The comments selected for inclusion in this section of the study are representative of those received. Some comments were selected from all survey population categories. The number of comments received by category is as follows:

Colonel w/Battalion and Brigade Command Experience	72
Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel (P) w/Battalion Command Experience	69
Lieutenant Colonel w/Battalion Command Experience	169
Lieutenant Colonel w/No Battalion Command Experience	9
Captain and Major w/Recent Battalion-Level Experience	<u>67</u>
Total	386

Selected comments approach a wide range of issues covered by the survey with emphasis given to those areas of most concern to the respondents. Rank and experience are indicated for each comment.

COMMENTS: TOUR LENGTH

"Believe extended command tours are very good for units and soldiers. Yet, 24 months is the ideal tour length. Most events are annual, so 24 months gives commanders two shots at everything. In battalions and brigades long-range programs/systems shouldn't take any longer than 12-18 months to get established. Longer than that, commanders too cautious or plans too complex. Third year may be period of too comfortable for commanders and too much of the same stuff for the unit." (COL BN/BDE)

"Believe 24 months is best. Less trauma on unit. Most effective in second year where focus can be on development of subordinates. Sat on 05 Command Selection Boards--too many good officers are not getting a chance. Long-range impact on the Army may well be a disaster should we have to mobilize with too few in the experienced pool." (COL BN/BDE)

"I am totally in favor of the 30-36 month command tour for both battalion and brigade levels. First, the tour length gets rid of a lot of officers who do not really want to command; and secondly, it provides stability for the unit. My only regret is this policy came too late for me. My recommendation is leave the tour length alone!" (COL BN/BDE)

"24 months is a good command tour. I would command for five years since it is the most satisfying of all jobs. However, commands must rotate and new blood must be brought in!" (COL BN/BDE)

"Based upon my battalion command experience and my present experience as a brigade commander, I believe 24 months is the most effective tour length for commanders of combined arms battalions. This tour length provides the

cohesion and the opportunity to train a unit without tearing the unit apart as the 18 month tour sometimes did. There should be no stigma attached to a battalion commander who only serves 24 months, assuming the tour is successful. I recommend a battalion command tour length be 24 months and no exceptions be allowed." (COL BN/BDE)

"Because of the cyclic nature of the Army's way of doing things, anything much less than 24 months wastes experience." (COL BN/BDE)

"Too many good officers do not get to command with the current 30+6 month tour policy. We need to increase the number of experienced commanders, especially should a war occur, to meet mobilization requirements." (COL BN/BDE)

"Tour length for battalion and brigade command should be 24 months. It should not be 24 months +6 months, but 24 months unless the commander must be reassigned (sick, etc.) or is relieved for cause. The plus or minus 6 months causes commanders to feel they must stay in command the maximum time or the promotion board will think 'he must have screwed-up.' If command is longer than 24 months, we don't have enough command job opportunities." (COL BN/BDE)

"In the long run, I would recommend 24 month tours for both battalion and brigade commanders, 18 months for company commanders, and preferably a minimum of 18 months for battalion and brigade XO's and S3's. Key positions other than battalion and brigade commanders need to be stabilized as much as possible." (COL BN/BDE)

"I favor a battalion command tour of 24 months and a brigade command tour of 30+6 months. There is less stress at brigade level, wives are more conditioned, and kids are older. Also, battalion commanders are and should be more consumed by command than brigade commanders." (COL BN/BDE)

"There is still universal anguish with every command list. Most infantry officers begin their career with a goal to command at the battalion level. It is now a completely unrealistic expectation. I believe the effect to be pervasive and unhealthy. A compromise might be to put battalion command at 18-24 months, and leave brigade command at 30 \pm 6. We might then have stability/continuity (I still think this to be a bogus issue), but yet have a reasonable flow in battalion command. I do not believe changing battalion commanders every 18-24 months affects the readiness of the unit."
(COL BN/BDE)

"On balance, I favor a 24 month command tour as providing the best compromise between command stability and opportunity to command. The present arrangement is tending to polarize the senior officers in an unhealthy way. Furthermore, it seems to me that the pool of experienced commanders from which we can draw during a crisis is not adequate for mobilization needs." (LTC(P)/BN)

"A peacetime Army must train for war--leaders must be developed at all grade levels, and leadership skills must be honed in as many officers as possible. The current command policy prevents the Army from achieving that crucial training objective." (COL/BN)

"Command is the greatest and most rewarding experience in the service--yet, I believe 30 months is six months too long." (COL/BN)

"Having commanded for 33-plus months at the battalion level, I can say honestly--that is too long. I think 24 months is the optional length for a person to command. There should be no \pm 6 month option. Also commanders in Korea should serve for 24 months on an accompanied tour." (COL/BN)

"Thirty \pm 6 months is the best length of command policy that we have had during my 26 plus years of active service. Long enough for the commander to realize many of his long-term projects/goals, flexible enough for senior

commanders to make sound decisions reference command tour length of subordinate commanders." (COL/BN)

"Extended command tours were supposed to slow the pace--they have only required commanders to go faster, longer." (LTC/BN)

"I consider extended command tours good for the unit and the Army in that commanders can make significant and lasting changes that improve combat readiness; he is not forced to build the battalion's reputation on a few highly visible events. I am concerned, however, that too few officers gain the valuable experience of command." (LTC/BN)

"Get rid of 30+6 requirement! It is entirely too long. Commanders in Korea (12 months) receive the same consideration as 30 month commanders." (LTC/BN)

"One cannot analyze command tour lengths in isolation from the length of tours served by subordinates and superiors. To bring the benefits of extended command tours to the forefront, units must remain relatively stable . . . and general officers must remain relatively stable." (LTC/BN)

"There is a feeling among my contemporaries that you should stay in command only long enough to get credit . . . and move on to less risky things." (LTC/BN)

". . . extended command tour paid special benefit to CS/CSS unit commander: need to know and understand supported units (not a requirement for combat units) was well served by prolonged exposure to them." (LTC/Non-CMD)

"Some senior commanders state that extending the length of command time for battalion and brigade commanders has added greatly to the stability of the unit and the chain of command. From their perspective that is probably true. They are like the nature lover watching a duck on a river. He appears to be stable and motionless. Underneath he is paddling like hell.

Unit stability has not increased. In many cases the 'top of the duck' is very tired." (LTC/BN)

"Although I personally felt I was able to do a better job with an extended command tour (31 months), I feel the reduced opportunity for qualified officers to command is hurting the Army." (LTC/BN)

"In my opinion there is only one negative aspect of the extended command tour and that is the shortage of LTC's with battalion command experience available to fill staff positions." (LTC/BN)

"A good compromise of what is best for the Army and best for the officer corps is a 24 month tour, with no exceptions." (LTC/BN)

"In the last five years I have served with two battalion commanders (tours of 24 and 30 months). It is my experience as a company commander and a battalion XO that extended command tours allow battalion commanders and subordinates to build a paced, cohesive program and develop continuity in those programs." (MAJ)

"I strongly agree with the extended tour because I feel only the very best should command." (MAJ)

". . . the topic of battalion command is discussed quite frequently at CGSC by students and their wives. Areas of discussion: (1) length of tours vs type of command (2) wives opinion on tour length (3) the last command list.--Summary: Command tour length should vary based on type of command and location." (MAJ)

"As a soon-to-graduate CGSC student with three company commands, battalion XO, and S3 tours, and division G3 operations experience, I see battalion command as an unrealistic goal [because of reduced opportunity]. I think this is wrong." (MAJ)

"The politicians will command today's Army for the most part while there continues to be an exodus of really good officers. We're grossly

eroding our experience base that will be invaluable in war. The long tour lengths have removed the incentive to strive for the opportunity to do what we've spent a career preparing for." (MAJ)

"Let's face it, the non-command selected officer (LTC or above) is a second class citizen in his primary specialty!" (MAJ)

"I endeavor to be a squadron commander, but from other squadron commanders' previous experiences, I would not look forward to a 30-month command stint." (CPT)

"A good aspect is that an incoming commander probably feels less pressure to make rapid changes. He has more time to 'feel out' the situation and make more reasoned, rational changes." (MAJ)

COMMENTS: EFFECTIVENESS

"It requires varying periods for commanders to become comfortable and highly effective in their roles." (COL/BN/BDE)

"Effectiveness of a battalion commander in relation to time is clearly dependent upon his previous experience in that type of organization."

(COL BN/BDE)

"The 36 month command tour fosters one of two reactions; either a decline in standards as the incumbent tires . . . and thus becomes lackadaisical or a reign of terror toward the end as he becomes tired, frustrated, and impatient of error." (COL BN/BDE)

"After 13-18 months, a commander tends to fall into a predictable pattern or rut. He may be more effective than in his first year, but will be less innovative and his subordinates will get by with less effort to avoid being caught short." (COL BN/BDE)

"Some of my battalion commanders experienced burnout or at least manifested a lot of the symptoms around the 24 month time frame. Through

the use of liberal leave, off duty policy for commanders, no time clock punching, and plenty of positive strokes burnout was reduced or minimized." (COL BN/BDE)

"At about the 18-month level, I noted a short period of frustration associated with having 'done it all'; however, after recovery, the next year plus was by far the most rewarding and beneficial period of my command." (COL BN/BDE)

"It has been my experience that young battalion commanders do exceedingly well the first 20-22 months of their tour. Then, the turbulence of company commanders, first sergeants, supply sergeants, battalion staff, tank crews, etc., becomes a distraction and their 'focus' fades. They then start grumbling more and displaying increasingly negative perceptions. The wife who has struggled to establish friendships must contend with redoing it all over again. It is a great strain." (COL BN/BDE)

"I have seen many 'burned-out' commanders after 24 months . . . the soldiers suffer in this case . . . the unit is less effective. Usually, it is the best commanders that are hurt because they work so hard at the job--seven days a week!" (COL BN/BDE)

"The 'command environment' and 'stability' of units, staffs, and commanders under you are the keys to how long you can command successfully. If you are in a zero defects, highly competitive statistically-managed division--where turbulence is high--12 to 18 months is about the maximum you can endure. If you are fortunate enough to command in a location where competition is against a standard, where statistics help you aim but aren't the edge of the ax, and where you can freely admit errors--and where the post has ample opportunities for family growth--then I truly believe you can command forever." (COL BN/BDE)

"Pressure of command is extremely difficult on the commander and his/her family, no matter how much we love command and troops (I honestly do). After 24 months, I was exhausted--if you do a good job, it takes its toll on you and your family." (COL/BN)

"The assumption that effectiveness can be measured in six month increments is fallacious. I measured my effectiveness in the performance of the unit, and we had multiple peaks occurring at various times throughout the command." (LTC/BN)

"First year is trial and error, second year you get it the way you want it. After two years, it's difficult to be too original and you find everyone has gone on except you, and you start team building all over again." (LTC/BN)

"I was prepared to remain in command for a full 36 months but was selected for SSC. I believe I might have turned into a 'lazy' commander during my third year." (LTC/BN)

"I believe stress is cumulative and it therefore increases as time in command or any stressful situation progresses. However, it is important to recognize that stress adaptation is highly individualized. Some individuals will actually increase in efficiency as stress increases." (MAJ)

"I believe that many of the questions asked are individual-dependent. The quality of the individual commander determines to a large extent the stress on his family, his development of subordinates, and the effectiveness of [his] command." (CPT)

"My observations and experience indicate that many commanders are failing to adequately challenge their subordinate units. This pacing syndrome is a product of an attempt to preclude early 'burnout' of either the battalion commander, his command, or both." (CPT(P))

COMMENTS: STABILITY/COHESION

"Although battalion and brigade commanders are spending more time in command, the staffs of these commanders continue to be a source of turmoil. In 27 months, I had three executive officers, five S-1's, four S-2's, three S-3's, and three S-4's (none of which were relieved). I spent most of my time training my own staff and during many periods had very little cohesion. Basically, the same problems were encountered by my four battalion commanders." (COL BN/BDE)

"The stability provided by a commander through an extended tour permeates the way a unit does business. The turbulence caused by too rapid a turnover of unit commanders impacts on training, field SOP, planning, and maintenance. Likewise, his consistency of action provides a steadying influence on his subordinate leaders and allows them the luxury of 'freedom to fail.'" (COL BN/BDE)

"The cohesion of the unit improves only because the commander is present in the unit over a longer period of time and through his efforts and personality there is some cohesiveness. I was fortunate in that the brigade CSM came on board two months after me--this really added to the cohesiveness of the brigade." (COL BN/BDE)

"I do not endorse the extended command tour length. The extended tour length was a response to the cohesion/stability issue based on the premise that 18 month commanders created turbulence as they sought to either make a name for themselves or learn their jobs. That is not the case. Turbulence results from normal PCS/local reassignments and the institutional urge to do a lot of things." (COL BN/BDE)

"I believe colonels and generals are responsible for creating the atmosphere in which true unit cohesion can either flourish or wither. In

this regard, command tour length for colonels and especially generals is very important. Ticket punching, still the rule at BG level, causes a mad scramble to establish one's reputation dramatically. This phenomenon creates the downward pressure that causes battalion and brigade commanders to focus on the short-term quick fix instead of the more reasonable long-term ones. The antithesis of what the increased command tour length should lead them to." (COL BN/BDE)

"Extended command tours stabilize the commander. Stability is needed with the ranks too. On the average, a battalion will lose one-third of its assigned soldiers each year. Regardless of how long a commander is assigned, training and other elements of command must be repeated about every three months to integrate soldiers. A stable commander helps to stabilize policy and procedures, training helps to stabilize soldiers in units and teams which result in cohesion." (COL BN/BDE)

"The notion that an extended command tour (36 months) fosters stability and cohesion in the unit and the chain of command is and will continue to be hogwash until we get enough of a grip on the Army to preclude 36 month commanders training 3 or 4 XO's, 2 or 3 complete staffs, and 2 to 4 sets of company/battery/troop commanders." (COL BN/BDE)

"We find in units that the place where cohesion and stability is needed most (the platoon, section, and squad) it is the worst. Battalion commanders who have commanded for 30-36 months have in all probability commanded 3 or 4 battalions during the period due to turnover, not one cohesive one." (COL/BN)

"Stabilizing the battalion commander does nothing for stabilizing the battalion. Junior officers, first sergeants, and NCOs need to be stabilized to provide any stability to the unit." (COL/BN)

"The most significant advantage to the extended battalion command tour was the continuity it provided for the direction of 'cyclical' major events, e.g., AGI, NSI, etc. The battalion commander was the best source of institutional knowledge." (CPT(P))

"Selection of officers for extended command is critical since the prime factor in unit effectiveness still lies with the individual. Extended command does not improve one's basic leadership potential." (MAJ)

"The biggest impact of extended command is to force commanders to focus on long-term goals rather than on short-term impact." (LTC)

"I do not believe the unit's ability to accomplish its combat mission is that greatly dependent on the length of the battalion commander's tour. Certainly he provides some stabilizing influence, but the unit cannot stay on a steady track of improvement when the battalion commander finds himself constantly having to cope with the changing of his subordinate 'horses' due to turbulence." (LTC/BN)

"Three division commanders in 30 months--are we stabilizing at the right level?" (LTC/BN)

"Stabilization of battalion commanders for more than 18 months is not worth the time and effort spent doing studies such as this. Frankly, we should be spending our time trying to stabilize our officers and NCO's in the units. Soldiers could care less how many battalion commanders they have. They are more concerned with company and platoon level. A new first sergeant, platoon sergeant, or squad leader every 10-12 months has a much more detrimental effect on a unit than does a new battalion commander every 18 months." (MAJ)

"While there are some positive aspects of extended battalion command, it appears to me that, as long as the XO, S3, and battery commanders are not somewhat stabilized (and CSM and 1SG's also), we are still going to have

the problems of turbulence which drove us to extend the length of tour in the first place." (MAJ)

"The Canadian battalion I was partnership with in Europe rotated its battalion commander every 24 months and its XO every 24 with a 12 month overlap--this allowed institutional memory to remain." (LTC/BN)

"The commander often trains three sets of subordinate officers during his tour due to normal rotation. Thus, he is a stabilizing force; however, it adds an unquantifiable amount of stress." (CPT(P))

COMMENTS: STRESS

"The combined draw on my personal energies and time almost cost me my marriage--things are still not what they should be--though divorce is out of the question now. The 'straw' that almost 'ripped it' was when the CG without consulting me, extended me in command for an additional six months." (COL BN/BDE)

"Stress on the family depends on the environment. My family really noticed it during my battalion command in Germany. Tour length was not the problem and I do not believe it is the problem today. It's that environment." (COL BN/BDE)

"Stress on family life (mine and my battalion and company commanders) was the single most detrimental effect of extended command. Under any command environment, location, or branch, the job of command cannot be done adequately if 'normal' hours and energies are expended." (COL BN/BDE)

"Battalion command takes all you've got, it doesn't leave much for your family. The longer you command, the deeper the scars on family members because of your lack of attention." (LTC(P)/BN)

"The extended command tours are difficult on families and require secure and stable marriages." (LTC/BN)

"Level of stress probably remain the same. But it probably accumulates over time like RADS in the body." (LTC/BN)

"My wife hated to give up command more than I did." (LTC/BN)

"Total time away from the family that a commander must take will have its toll." (MAJ)

"Extended tours separate those that put their family first from those who put their family second." (MAJ)

"Stress on the family depends upon the individual." (CPT)

COMMENTS: OTHER SUBJECTS

"A 'Command' OPMS speciality would be good for the Army. Other services use it. Then, most commanders would be willing to serve upon selection. 'Ticket punchers' who command are a detriment to the profession." (COL BN/BDE)

"I am in full support of the OPMS command speciality. Once selected, it is imperative that the officer be fully utilized as a commander or in related positions which provide challenging opportunities for the selectee to share command experiences/lessons learned and to enhance his/her individual growth as a future commander." (LTC(P)/BN)

"I feel 80% of the officer corps would apply for acceptance in a command specialty; which leaves us where we are now." (LTC/BN)

"The command selection process works." (COL BN/BDE)

"I think an OPMS command specialty would be catastrophic for the officer corps. We currently have a healthy tension between the 'beleaguered' commander and the equally harried staff officer. To formalize the separation would promote elitism and drive a wedge between those tracking for command and those (the majority) pursuing other interests. The damage would be most acute with combat arms." (COL BN/BDE)

". . . with regard to battalion command declinations, especially among CS/CSS officers, it should be noted that the figures are unnecessarily skewed and the situation unfortunately delicate because the practice is to include for battalion command consideration officers who are in the primary zone for 06. They should be excluded because (1) those selected for 06 would not have the opportunity to fulfill the mandate, and (2) those not selected for 06 should not be selected for battalion command." (LTC/NON-CMD--because of 06 selection)

"My chances for selection as a battalion commander have been significantly reduced with the extended command tour. If I'm not selected, I will retire at 20 years." (MAJ)

"The present tour does not provide incentive to retain quality officers; they will retire early as a result of the reduced number of battalions available to command." (LTC/BN)

"Subordinate development including tolerance of errors is dependent upon the ability and philosophy of the commander, not tour length." (COL BN/BDE)

"In reference to development of subordinates, it is more dependent upon the quality of the commander than the length of his tour." (CPT)

"Exposure to different styles of leaders--even poor ones--is more advantageous than prolonged experience with a good one." (MAJ)

"Junior leader development is a serious shortcoming in our institution. Because of this, the majority of junior leader development occurs simply by experiencing a wide range of leaders. Thus, longer tours impact adversely on this experience." (CPT)

"I have spent my entire time as an 05 either at USAWC, in command, or in a job to preposition me for [battalion] command--if not selected for

brigade command I have not had the opportunity to develop an alternate specialty." (LTC/BN)

"Declination of command is a very personal decision that is reached through a different rationalization process by each officer. Generally, however, I feel that the main reason is that the officer lacks the requisite confidence and desire." (LTC/BN)

"From my conversations with my commanders, I've gotten the impression that the current concern with qualification in an alternate specialty is temporary and that a combat arms officer is 'dead in the water' if he does not command at the O5 level. Consequently, the more command time the better." (MAJ)

"People suffer from longer commands when considered for promotion against those who have punched 2 or 3 tickets during a like period." (LTC/BN)

"Family considerations (especially attitude of the wife) are major factors in acceptance and performance in command. Supportive wife and family made the difference in two of my eight battalion commanders." (COL BN/BDE)

"The 30+6 months command tour prompts some individuals who would have tried to 'stand on their heads' for 18 months to decline the opportunity to command." (COL BN/BDE)

"Family consideration is, in my mind, frequently used as an excuse by those who fear the challenge and lack the support of their wives." (COL BN/BDE)

"While family stress may be a factor in declination of command, personal experience indicates it was done because of house mortgage, spouse's job, good school availability, and second career planning." (COL BN/BDE)

"Some officers are cut out to be commanders, others are miserable in command. The perception must be changed that command is a ticket that must be punched. We must find a way to weed out the officers who are miserable in command and who are thereby ruining young officers, NCOs, and good troops." (COL BN/BDE)

"As OPMS begins to 'work' better, officers will see that it is easier to move up by avoiding command. As of now, it is a programmed, officially-blessed ticket punch system." (COL BN/BDE)

". . . the Army does a disservice to its commanders by not providing financial assistance for entertaining. Social events build unit cohesion and the commander must sponsor a large number of these. In addition, it is valuable for young officers to see how the battalion commander lives and the social standards he sets. Without undue extravagance, a battalion commander's social expenses can run well over \$1,000.00 a year. This is a heavy cost to bear in a year of stress." (COL BN/BDE)

"Although I indicated command at both the battalion and brigade level were significant financial burdens, they were self-imposed. I chose to have social activities as a way of bringing families closer together." (COL BN/BDE)

"It is a disgrace that there is no funding provided to defray the cost associated with battalion command; i.e., change of command receptions (expected at each change of command), New Year's Day receptions, community responsibilities, etc. The entertainment my wife and I hosted, to include the above events, cost us in excess of \$1,600 for the 30 month tour." (COL/BN)

"My wife felt some bitterness toward the 'expected' entertaining that reduced other areas of the family budget. This problem appears to be

unique to Europe. I estimate that we averaged \$100-150 per month on entertainment and required social events." (LTC(P)/BN)

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON WRITTEN COMMENTS

After a thorough review of all written comments, some conclusions can be drawn which provide insight into the perceptions of the respondents. The topic of battalion command tour length was clearly the main item of concern as indicated by the 274 comments on the subject.

A vast majority of the respondents (211) expressed views that favor a change to the present policy of 30 months, plus or minus 6 months. While their perceptions ranged from proposals of 18 months to 30 months for tour length, the most often cited battalion command tour length desired was 24 months. The reasons for supporting change to a shorter command tour length that were most often expressed were: decreased command opportunities for well qualified officers, reduction in the Army's experience base of former battalion commanders, lack of evidence of further measureable improvement in units beyond about 24 months, and stress on the officers and their families. A breakout of officers providing comments which favor change is as follows:

Colonel w/Battalion and Brigade Command Experience	44
Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel (P) w/Battalion Command Experience	41
Lieutenant Colonel w/Battalion Command Experience	87
Captain and Major	39

There were 74 respondents supporting the current command tour policy. They tended to link an increase in efficiency and effectiveness with the longer tours of battalion commanders. A breakout of respondents favoring current command tour length policy of 30 months, plus or minus 6 months, is as follows:

Colonel w/Battalion and Brigade Command Experience	16
Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel(P) w/Battalion Command Experience	5
Lieutenant Colonel w/Battalion Command Experience	35
Captain and Major	18

Those respondents favoring battalion command tour lengths longer than the current policy were insignificantly low.

The second most highlighted issue raised by respondents was the great concern over the lack of stability in US Army battalions. Officers who favor the current policy as well as those who desire change are virtually in agreement that one of our biggest problems is the turbulence of personnel, especially subordinate troop leaders (commanders, first sergeants, platoon sergeants, etc.) and key battalion staff members. Senior commander changes are also a matter of considerable concern. There is a general belief that stabilizing the battalion commander at 30+6 months is insufficient to overcome the turbulence in battalions, and thus commanders fail to accomplish the stated purpose of the extended command tour. Numerous examples were provided by respondents concerning the number of company/battery/troop commanders and key staff officer changes they experienced. They concluded that these frequent changes had an adverse impact on their continuity of effort to command. There were 118 comments addressing the subject of stability and cohesion.

Colonel w/Battalion and Brigade Command Experience	20
Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel(P) w/Battalion Command Experience	22
Lieutenant Colonel w/Battalion Command Experience	58
Captain and Major	18

On the issue of stress, about the only conclusion that can be drawn is that most officers agree that a considerable amount of stress is present in the command environment. Ideas on what causes it, how it changes with

respect to time in command, and how it affects commanders and their families vary greatly. A sizeable number of respondents believe that it is an extremely important issue with the military family and must be a factor weighed in the equation of the optimum battalion command tour length.

Many of the respondents expressed a concern for our ability to mobilize as a result of the extended command tour. The extended command tour policy has by definition resulted in fewer officers with battalion command experience than did the previous policy. Also, the selection of fewer personnel for command resulted in a greater non-selection rate, and concomitantly an increased number of quality officers "getting out" (Question 35).

Those who were not selected for command but did stay in the Army are perceived as being less likely to be promoted (Question 9) and not likely to be as effective staff officers (Question 15) as those who were selected.

If question 35 is extended in theory, it can be assumed that many of those with battalion command experience, when not selected for brigade command, will also "get out." Thus, according to the data provided by this survey, staffs will decline in effectiveness as perceived by those with command experience.

CHAPTER V

STUDY CONCLUSIONS

-- Most officers still believe that command experience is important for promotion to colonel and that to willingly forgo that opportunity may impact adversely on their career. They do not, however, believe that the length of command is significant.

-- Commanders become most effective at 13-18 months and loss of effectiveness begins, if at all, after 25 months.

-- Many quality officers, especially in the combat arms, will leave the Army if denied the opportunity to command.

-- The extended battalion command tour is causing more officers to decline the opportunity to command.

-- It is likely that command experience enhances an officer's potential for effective staff service.

-- Turbulence above and below battalion command level is materially degrading the stability and cohesion sought by proponents of the extended command tour.

-- The extended command tour has significantly reduced the number of division and higher level staff officers with command experience.

-- Reduction of the pool of command-experienced officers will have a negative affect on mobilization capabilities.

-- Financial outlays are a burden to those in command.

-- Stress is a significant factor in command and appears to be cumulative. However, no conclusion could be drawn based solely on command tour length.

-- The extended command tour enhances officer and junior leader development.

-- Extended command reduces the opportunity for alternate specialty development, but does not significantly affect advancement.

-- It has not been proven that the extended command tour materially enhances unit or chain of command stability and cohesion.

-- The extended command tour has some positive effect on a unit's ability to accomplish assigned missions.

-- Command tour lengths should be fixed, with no \pm options. Comments imply a widely held stigma related to completion of a command tour which is less than the maximum "option."

-- The optimum battalion command tour length in the US Army should be 24 months.*

*One member of the study group believed the optimum battalion command tour length should be 30 months, based primarily upon concern for increased unit effectiveness and improved officer/leader development.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fix the battalion command tour at 24 months.*
- Improve stability of junior leaders and key battalion staff members.
- Provide funds to assist battalion commanders in fulfilling appropriate social obligations.

*See previous footnote, p. 48.

APPENDIX 1

**EXTENDED BATTALION COMMAND TOUR
COVER LETTER AND SURVEY**



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013


REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AWCS

15 February 1983

SUBJECT: Extended Battalion Command Tour

1. A study of the extended battalion command tour is being conducted as part of the Military Study Program here at the US Army War College. You have been selected to participate based on your experience. The study is intended to assist future commanders in being more effective through additional training, knowledge, and understanding of Army policy. If you have already filled out a similar survey for the US Air Command and Staff College, which was mailed to field artillery officers only, it is not necessary to fill out this survey; however, a response would be appreciated.
2. Four students of the USAWC (COL George LaBlonde, LTC Robert Broyles, LTC Ronald Forest, LTC Clifton Potter), three of whom have completed an extended command tour, are conducting the study. Questions posed were selected by these students and do not reflect policies or attitudes of the College or Department of the Army. This survey has been approved by DA (control number ATZI-NCR-83-2).
3. Your cooperation and frank responses will be a major contribution to a study of considerable importance to the Army. The answers you provide will be completely confidential. Signature or identification is not required.


RICHARD D. LAWRENCE
Major General, USA
Commandant

Completion of the attached questionnaire will take less than 30 minutes unless you wish to provide written comments. Comments are requested and all comments will be considered. You may also add comments on the page provided if you wish. Answer all questions unless instructions indicate you should skip them. There are no "right" answers; if you do not feel completely comfortable with the choices, select the option which most closely fits your feelings. In completing the questionnaire, select the one best answer to each question.

Use a No. 2 pencil. Mark your answers by drawing a horizontal line through the letter which corresponds to your response. Erase cleanly any answers you wish to change.

Please place the completed answer sheet and the comment sheet in the attached envelope and mail. To be considered, your answers and comments must be received by 16 March 1983.

Thank you for your time, your honesty, and your prompt response.

PART I - BACKGROUND DATA

1. What is your present rank?

CPT	MAJ	LTC	COL	BG or Higher
A	B	C	D	E

2. What is your present marital status?

Currently Married	Legally Separated	Never Married	Divorced, Marriage Annulled and not Remarried	Widow/Widower
A	B	C	D	E

3. How many dependents do you have (excluding yourself)?

None	One	Two or Three	Four or Five	Six or More
A	B	C	D	E

4. What is your basic branch?

IN/AR/FA/AD	MP/CE/SC	OD/QM/TC	AG/MI/MS	Other
A	B	C	D	E

5. What is your highest completed level of civilian education?

High School	Some College	College Graduate	Some Graduate Work	Graduate or Professional Degree
A	B	C	D	E

6. What is your military education level (pick highest)?

Advanced Course	CAS-3	CGSC	SSC
(Selectee, Student, or Grad) (Selectee, Student, or Grad)			
A	B	C	D

7. Approximately how much time have you spent in various battalions during your career (excluding school battalions or battalion command)?

1-11 months	12-26 months	27-48 months	49-60 months	61 or more months
A	B	C	D	E

8. Approximately how much time altogether have you spent in command of a company/battery/troop?

None	1-11 months	12-18 months	19-24 months	25 months or more
A	B	C	D	E

PART II

The following questions are to be answered by all survey participants. Pick the one answer which best describes how you feel.

9. If an officer declines battalion command consideration prior to selection, and then does well in an important job, that officer is as likely to be promoted to Colonel as a similar officer who accepted battalion command.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

10. In your opinion, officers decline battalion command primarily as a result of:

Financial Consideration	Family Consideration	Stress of Command	Alternate Skill Development	Other
A	B	C	D	E

11. For career progression, the longer one is in command the better are his/her chances of advancement.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

12. Officers who command a battalion for 30 months or more may have less time to develop an alternate specialty. Some say that will adversely affect their chances for advancement. Do you:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

13. As a general rule, the battalion commander becomes most effective during what period of a command tour?

7 to 12 months A	13 to 18 months B	19 to 24 months C	25 to 30 months D	31 months or more E
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14. As a general rule, during what period does the effectiveness of a battalion commander in command start to decrease (excluding short tour areas)?

13 to 18 months A	19 to 24 months B	25 to 30 months C	31 months or more D	Does not decrease E
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15. In performance as a staff officer at division level (or higher), a former battalion commander when compared to an officer who has not commanded at battalion level is likely to be:

Much more Effective A	More Effective B	Just as Effective C	Less Effective D	Much Less Effective E
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16. Some believe that senior commanders will be more likely to relieve a marginal commander early in his command if that officer is going to be in command for 30 ± 6 months than if that officer is scheduled to command for a shorter period such as 12 or 18 months. Do you:

Strongly Agree A	Agree B	Neither Agree nor Disagree C	Disagree D	Strongly Disagree E
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17. The extension of command time has greatly improved the stability and cohesion of the chain of command.

Strongly Agree A	Agree B	Neither Agree nor Disagree C	Disagree D	Strongly Disagree E
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18. The extension of command time has greatly improved the stability and cohesion of the unit.

Strongly Agree A	Agree B	Neither Agree nor Disagree C	Disagree D	Strongly Disagree E
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19. Development of subordinate leaders is an important responsibility of battalion commanders. Extended command for the battalion commander:

Significantly improves leader development A	Slightly improves leader development B	Has no effect on leader development C	Slightly harms leader development D	Severely harms leader development E
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20. In your opinion, what is the impact of the extended battalion command tour on the capability of battalions with extended tour commanders to accomplish assigned missions?

Significantly improves mission accomplishment	Slightly improves mission accomplishment	Neither improves nor degrades	Slightly harms mission accomplishment	Significantly harms unit mission accomplishment
A	B	C	D	E

21. As a result of the extended command tours, junior officers will in most cases serve longer under one commander. This will:

Significantly improve officer development	Slightly improve officer development	Have no effect on officer development	Slightly harm officer development	Significantly harm officer development
A	B	C	D	E

22. As a result of extending the length of the command tour, battalion commanders are in fact more likely to allow junior officers to make mistakes without retribution.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

23. Does stress on the family of the battalion commander change with the time in command?

Stress increases with time in command	Stress is greater during the "middle" of command	Stress remains generally constant	Stress decreases with time in command
A	B	C	D

24. Does stress on the families of members of the battalion (other than the family of the battalion commander) change with the length of time in command of the battalion commander?

Stress increases with length of the command tour	There is no change in stress with length of the command tour	Stress decreases with length of the command tour
A	B	C

25. As a general rule, the home of a child whose parent is a battalion commander is as conducive to future development of a child as is the home of an officer who is not a battalion commander.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A	B	C	D	E

26. If you were responsible for making the decision, how long would you keep battalion commanders in command (other than in areas such as Korea)?

12-18 months A	19-24 months B	25-30 months C	31-36 months D	37 months or more E
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27. If you are married, how long do you think your wife would want the battalion command tour to be (other than in areas such as Korea)?

Not Married A	12-18 months B	19-24 months C	25-30 months D	31 months or more E
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28. What is your status of selection for battalion command?

Not eligible for Bn Cmd A	Eligible but not selected for Bn Cmd B	Selected for and declined Bn Cmd C	Accepted Bn Cmd D
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PART III

The following questions are for officers who are either in command of a battalion now or who have completed command. If you have not commanded a battalion you are finished with this portion of the survey, please turn to page 8.

29. What is your battalion command status?

In command now. A	Completed command. B
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30. How many months have you completed as a battalion commander?

12 months or less A	13-19 months B	20-25 months C	26-31 months D	32 months or more E
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31. Location of battalion command.

Korea A	Germany B	Europe, other than Germany C	CONUS D	Other E
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32. Type of battalion command?

TOE, Combat Arms A	TOE, Other B	Training Battalion C	Administrative Battalion (such as School or Garrison) D	Other E
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33. Number of dependents who accompanied you during your command tour.

No Dependents	One Dependent	Two Dependents	Three Dependents	Four Dependents or more
A	B	C	D	E

34. Did you find the need to finance social activities associated with battalion command burdensome?

Significant Burden	Moderate Burden	Light Burden	No Burden
A	B	C	D

35. Had you not been selected for battalion command would you have

Focused on an alternate specialty?	Intensely focused on primary specialty?	Retired earlier.
A	B	C

36. At what period of time in your command did you begin to feel comfortable in your ability to lead, command, and manage effectively and efficiently the resources of your battalion?

Was always confident	During 1-3 months in command.	During 4-8 months in command.	During 9-12 months in command.	After 13 months or more in command.
A	B	C	D	E

37. Should command be an OPMS specialty for which an officer applies and is selected?

Yes	No
A	B

38. Which statement best describes your tolerance level of mistakes by subordinates while you were in command?

Was consistent throughout command	Increased with time in command	Decreased with time in command
A	B	C

39. As a teacher and developer of subordinates, your performance in command.

I have been in command less than six months.	Was consistent throughout.	Was best in the first six months.	Was best in the middle six months.	Was best in the last six months.
A	B	C	D	E

The following questions are for officers either in command at brigade-level now or those who have commanded at brigade-level. If you have not commanded at brigade-level, please turn to page 8.

40. What is your brigade-level command status?

In command now.	Completed command.
A	B

41. How many months have you completed as a brigade-level commander?

12 months or less	13-19 months	20-25 months	26-31 months	32 months or more
A	B	C	D	E

42. Location of your brigade level command.

Korea	Germany	Europe, other than Germany	CONUS	Other
A	B	C	D	E

43. Type of brigade command?

TOE, Combat Arms	TOE, Other	Training Brigade	Administrative Brigade (such as School or Garrison)	Other
A	B	C	D	E

44. How many battalion commanders who were subordinate to you commanded battalions in excess of 24 months (finishing command either during or after your command tenure)?

None	One	Two	Three	Four or more
A	B	C	D	E

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SECTION. PLEASE TURN TO COMMENT SECTION ON PAGE 8.

THIS PAGE IS FOR YOUR COMMENTS. YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE QUESTIONS ASKED OR ON ANY ASPECTS OF THE EXTENDED COMMAND TOUR ARE DESIRED. THIS SHEET WILL BE SEPARATED FROM THE OTHER ANSWER SHEET. BACKGROUND DATA ARE AGAIN REQUIRED TO PLACE THE COMMENTS IN PERSPECTIVE. YOUR TIME AND INTEREST ARE APPRECIATED.

RANK _____ BRANCH _____ BN COMMAND EXPERIENCE: YES ___ NO ___
BDE COMMAND EXPERIENCE: YES ___ NO ___

COMMENTS:

USE REVERSE IF REQUIRED

APPENDIX 2

SURVEY OF WIVES OF EX-BATTALION COMMANDERS

BACKGROUND

There have been many articles and studies which discussed the importance of the family to the success and happiness of the service member. It was decided to augment the extended command study with a questionnaire to wives of former ex-battalion commanders. The US Army War College is one of the few places, considering the privacy act, where that can be easily done. A biographical sketch book is published each year listing the previous assignments of students. A student telephone book is also published, listing the names of wives and if they accompanied their husband to the US Army War College. These were compared, and 81 questionnaires were sent to the wives of former battalion commanders who were in residence at the US Army War College.

Mailing envelopes were provided for return and all responses were totally anonymous.

The results, like the sample, are not scientific and do not represent the Army as a whole, in that the husbands were obviously successful in their career and their command.

Different results might be obtained if different groups were sampled or if a sample were taken while the commander was in command.

The questionnaire is reproduced herein. Below each answer in parenthesis is the number of respondents choosing that answer to the question and the corresponding percentage. Sixty-five of eighty-one surveys were returned for a return rate of 80.2 percent. Question 11 had 76 responses. Several respondents chose more than one answer.

WIVES SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I - Background Data

1. Husband's present rank?
 - a. LTC b. COL
55/84.6 10/15.4
2. Number of years married to present husband?
 - a. 0-5 yrs. b. 6-10 yrs. c. 11-15 yrs. d. 16-20 yrs.
3/4.6 2/3.1 12/18.5 32/49.2
 - e. 21 or more years
16/24.6
3. Number of children that resided with you during your husband's command tour?
 - a. None b. One c. Two or Three d. Four or Five e. Six or more
5/7.6 11/16.9 44/67.7 4/6.1 1/1.5
4. Did you reside with your husband during the majority of the time he commanded a battalion?
 - a. Yes b. No
62/95.4 3/4.6
5. How long did your husband command a battalion?
 - a. 17 months or less b. 18-23 months c. 24-28 months
1/1.5 17/26.1 21/32.3
 - d. 29-33 months e. 34 or more months
21/32.3 5/7.7
6. Where did he command a battalion?
 - a. Korea b. Germany c. Europe other than Germany
3/4.6 21/32.3
 - d. Continental U.S. e. Other
39/60.0 2/3.1
7. What type of battalion did he command?
 - a. Tactical combat battalion b. Tactical battalion other than combat
48/73.8 6/9.7
 - c. Training battalion d. Other type of battalion
8/12.3 3/4.6

Part II

8. Are you glad your husband commanded a battalion?
 - a. Yes b. No c. Indifferent
62/95.4 1/1.5 2/3.1

9. Did you enjoy your time as the wife of a battalion commander?

a. Yes b. No c. Indifferent
58/89.2 3/4.6 4/6.2

10. Do you want your husband to be the commander of a brigade-sized organization?

a. Yes b. No c. Indifferent
50/76.9 9/13.8 6/9.2

11. In your opinion, officers decline battalion command primarily as a result of:

a. Financial considerations b. Family considerations c. Stress of
5/6.6 43/56.6 18/23.7
command d. Not interested e. Other
7/9.2 3/3.9

12. At what point (if any) did you detect your husband was getting "tired of command?"

a. 13-18 months b. 19-24 months c. 25-30 months d. 31 months
1/1.5 3/4.6 11/16.9 11/16.9
or more e. Did not get tired
39/60.0

13. In an average month, how many hours of your time did you contribute to the battalion wives, etc. Include voluntary and "command performances". Estimate the time, excluding the time the wife of a LTC would have spent if her husband was not in command and at the same installation.

a. 0 hours b. 1-15 hours c. 16-25 hours d. 26-40 hours
1/1.5 11/16.9 20/30.8 16/24.6
e. 40 or more
17/26.2

14. Does stress on the family of a battalion commander change with length of time in command?

a. Stress increases with time in command b. Stress is greatest in
12/18.5 1/1.5
the middle of command c. Stress remains constant with time in command
32/49.2
d. Stress decreases with time in command
20/30.8

15. As a general rule, the home of a child where father is a battalion commander is as conducive to future development as in the home of a child whose father is a LTC and not a battalion commander

a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. Neither agree nor disagree
10/15.4 19/29.2 20/30.8
d. Disagree e. Strongly disagree
9/13.8 7/10.8

16. How long do you believe the command tour for battalion commander should be
(excluding Korea and other short-term assignments)?

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| a. 12-18 months | b. 19-24 months | c. 25-30 months | d. 31-36 months |
| 11/16.9 | 44/67.7 | 8/12.3 | 2/3.1 |
| e. 37 months or more | | | |
| 1/1.5 | | | |

COMMENT SECTION FOLLOWS

Comments on any aspects of battalion command length, or the family of a
battalion commander are solicited. Thank you.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Also affecting validity of the questionnaire is the fact that in all cases the questions were not worded identically with those asked battalion commanders. This was purposeful and necessary to insure understanding of the questions, and in many cases to obtain a different perspective of response.

In most cases the wives were pleased their husbands had commanded, enjoyed the assignment, and wanted to do it again. No trend was noted among those (total of 15) who either did not want or were indifferent to their husband commanding a brigade-sized organization. Several wives personally thanked the authors for asking their opinions and welcomed the opportunity to reply.

COMPARISON WITH BATTALION COMMANDERS

Wives of battalion commanders believed that the family was a more significant consideration in declination of battalion command (56.6%) than did battalion commanders (42%). To the wives, stress was not as significant (23.7%) as it was to those (the husbands) who had been in command (44.7%).

The spouse, like their husbands, believed stress on the family of the battalion commander was relatively constant (wives 49.2%, battalion commanders 43.9%). The wives were also similar in their feeling of neutrality on the conduciveness of the home to the development of a battalion commander's child. The wives were more favorably disposed to the conduciveness of the home than were their husbands.

A significant majority of the wives (60%) believed that their husbands did not "get tired of command."

The most significant question was, "How long do you believe the command tour for battalion commanders should be?" Results are shown below in percent choosing the answer:

<u>Group Responding</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>12-18 Months</u>	<u>19-24 Months</u>	<u>25-30 Months</u>	<u>31-36 Months</u>	<u>37 mos or More</u>
All Wives	65	16.9	67.7	12.3	3.1	1.5
Wives whose husb. comd 17 mos or less	1	100.0	--	--	--	--
Wives whose husb. comd 18-23 mos	17	29.4	64.7	5.9	--	--
Wives whose husb. comd 24-28 mos	21	9.5	76.2	14.3	--	--
Wives whose husb. comd 29-33 mos	21	9.5	71.4	19.0	--	--
Wives whose husb. comd 34 mos or more	5	20.0	40.0	--	40.0	--

COMMENTS OF WIVES

The following comments from wives were chosen as representative, not to make certain points.

"Twenty-four months were about right. My husband loved every minute of it, but I was getting very tired."

"He could command forever and it wouldn't affect his health. He could get a new wife in that case however."

"The longer command time allowed both of us to do a quality job rather than a 'hurry-up-let's-show-them-quickly' sort of job. Pressure is less with more time. Also the added stability was good for our family."

"The last 18 months of the 37-month command was easier for me than the first. By this time I knew what was expected of me and what to expect."

"The other personnel in the battalion were not stabilized for 30 months or more. The phenomenon was that both the commander and his wife had

complete changeover of people during their time and retraining was the order of the day."

"By the time you spend 3 yrs in command--the whole family is burned out."

"It was like leaving family behind, a closeness you develop the longer the command tour."

"A special section should be added (to the study) for those who were in Europe because of the added responsibilities of the commander's wife to the 'community' and to the German community."

"The Army can no longer count on getting '2 for 1.' There's a whole new wife out there with a whole new set of priorities."

"The time spent was the most fulfilling experience I've had as an Army wife."

"His command became a very bitter experience due to the outdated attitude of his commanding officer's wife."

"The majority of the young officer's wives today are well educated and active. They work for self-fulfillment in addition to supplanting the family's finances. This life style is not contradicting to the supporting roll of an Army wife--it enforces it!"

"The battalion commander should be required to take leave at least one week every 6 months or year--not just paper leave."

"Some of the seminars and family life programs offered here at the War College should be made available to wives prior to O5 command."

"If the wife's participation is important, she should be given some training."

"Extra pay should be considered."

"I believe commander's wives should be allowed to work (paid) without harassment from the CG and his wife."

"Given all the factors involved in command, i.e., stress (on both CO and family), opportunity for others to command, unit effectiveness, etc.--24 months seems the ideal "compromise" for a command tour. Command length should be the same for everyone--including Korea."

"We wives whose husbands had 18 months were busy getting things done (because of time) while the three year wives set goals which were more long-termed. I learned a lot!"

"It was an absolutely super time for both of us. 18 months too short. Could easily have gone 24. But 36 sounds like a lot of months to recruit thrift shop volunteers."

"Many demands are made on the wife which take her away from the family along with her husband."

"Time spent with the battalion wives not only took time from the children, but from my husband."

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